Oct. 1962

15¢

# TROTSKYISM and the CUBAN REVOLUTION—

## an answer to Hoy

by Joseph Hansen

# Subscribe

## The MILITANT

A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER

Published in the Interests of the Working People

**$3 for one year**
**Introductory: $1 for 4 months**

---

**The Militant**
**116 University Place,**
**New York 3, N. Y.** ☐ $3 ☐ $1

Name .....

Street ..... Apt. No. .....

City ..... Zone .... State .....

---

## International Socialist Review

**116 University Place, N. Y. 3, N. Y.**

**Enclosed is** ..... **for my subscription** to the Marxist Quarterly

☐ $1.25 per year ☐ $2.50 for 2 years

Name .....

Street ..... Apt. No. .....

City ..... Zone ..... State .....

# An Answer to "Hoy's" Slander on Trotskyism And Cuban Revolution

**By Joseph Hansen**

What has been the response of the other leaders of the Cuban Communist Party to the vigorous measures undertaken by Fidel Castro against Anibal Escalante and the bureaucratic practices he fostered? All reports indicate that they were among the most enthusiastic in applauding the sudden downfall of their comrade. Never have they appeared so warm in their congratulations to Castro over a timely action in behalf of the welfare and advancement of the Cuban Revolution.

Out of gratitude to Castro for such a felicitous measure against what could have developed into a bureaucratic cancer, one might expect a contribution from these other leaders of the Cuban Communist Party, a bit of self-examination and self-criticism that would help explain why Escalante felt that he could get away with it.

How did it happen, for instance, that none of them took the initiative in exposing Escalante's practices? How did it happen that none of them stood up in active opposition to this factional-minded bureaucrat who set out to build a personal machine? Were they afraid to speak up? If so, what made them afraid? Where they involved, too? Or were they just blind to the glaring faults of their fellow leaders? If so, how explain this blindness? Was it due to the long years of training in the school of Stalinism where bureaucratic practices and bureaucratic personalities were so much the norm that they could develop into a cult?

### Honest Answers Needed

Honest frank answers by Escalante's associates to questions like these could provide instructive educational material for young revolutionists — and not only in Cuba. Some self-criticism did take place, at least enough to make the record. But considerations other than the educational needs of young revolutionists have evidently preoccupied Escalante's former intimate collaborators.

Fidel's moves against bureaucratism hold certain implications. If Fidel presists in this course, Es-

calante's comrades no doubt have reasoned, it will inevitably lend impetus to the antibureaucratic mood. Indeed, the ruin of Escalante signified in itself a considerable strengthening of the tendency to democratize the revolution along Leninist lines. But how can pressure be placed in the opposite direction without openly challenging Fidel? An indirect approach is needed. To influence Paul, attack Peter. This is especially shrewd if Peter happens to be gagged or the victim of much prejudice.

Such, we may surmise, were the calculations behind the campaign which *Hoy*, the daily newspaper of the Cuban Communist Party, recently opened against "Trotskyism."

Because of the imperialist embargo of Cuba and the consequent communication difficulties, we do not receive *Hoy* regularly. We are therefore unable to measure the campaign with precision. But we do have at hand six articles, some of them quite long and quite evidently placed on target with painstaking care. These are sufficient to indicate the real state of mind among at least some of the leaders of the Cuban Communist Party since the news was broken to them about Escalante being no longer at his desk. In no other sector of the world Communist movement is such alarm evident over "Trotskyism."

### The Essence of Trotskyism

Before getting into an analysis of the articles published by *Hoy* it will prove useful to state the essence of Trotskyism:

(1) It offers the most profound theoretical appreciation of the development of the Russian Revolution and, by extension, all modern revolutions, especially in colonial and semicolonial areas. (This is the theory which Trotsky developed, in the light of Russian experience, from some observations Marx made about "permanent" revolution.)

(2) It offers the only logically coherent explanation of how a bureaucratic caste could rise in the Soviet Union and the only program that, in the Leninist tradition, combines opposition to bureaucratism with unconditional Soviet defense.

(3) It offers the most thoroughgoing program of opposition to fascism and all similar reactionary tendencies symptomatic of the decay of capitalist democracy.

(4) It is the most consistent present-day proponent of the revolutionary-socialist way out of the wars and other horrors of a world capitalist system in its death agony.

*Hoy* does not offer its readers these facts about Trotskyism. It offers a different picture. In the June 16 issue, for instance, the editors devote an entire article purporting to present the history of Trotskyism beginning with 1909. That year is chosen instead of the more appropriate one of 1905 because of a bitter factional dispute in the Russian Social Democratic Party which reached its culmination in 1912. At one point in this dispute Lenin angrily called Trotsky a "Judas." What the real issues were in that dispute of a half century ago remains obscure in *Hoy's* account. But it must be admitted that the epithet "Judas," which *Hoy* hauls out of the dusty archives, does help divert attention from the more troublesome word of current political interest — "Escalante."

*Hoy's* presentation of Trotsky's role in the 1917 Revolution adheres quite faithfully to the version concocted by Stalin for use in the infamous Moscow frame-up trials of the thirties. For instance, Trotsky "entered the Bolshevik Party with the aim of struggling

within it against Leninism." After the triumph of the Revolution "Trotsky continued opposing Lenin in a series of major questions . . ." In 1921 Trotsky "began a factional struggle inside the Bolshevik party . . ." With the death of Lenin in 1924, Trotsky "directed his principal attack against Stalin who had been ratified as General Secretary of the Party."

In 1927 came "expulsion," these Cuban partisans of General Secretary Stalin inform us, and Trotsky "went abroad and organized a rabid campaign of calumnies against the Soviet power, while directing conspiratorial activities of his followers inside the Soviet Union itself."

And so on and so forth. All that is required to answer this falsified version of history is an asterisk and a footnote for the serious newcomer to the radical movement.*

What Escalante's former collaborators leave out of their lying account is more interesting than the concoctions they put in. Two items have special pertinence to the problems of the Cuban Revolution.

One is Trotsky's role, as the intimate colleague of Lenin, in organizing the political and military defense of the Soviet Union against the combined imperialist and counter-revolutionary assault undertaken first by Germany and then by the Allies. This period holds many lessons which partisans of the Cuban Revolution could profitably study.

The other is Lenin's initiation in 1923 of the struggle against bureaucratism in the Soviet Union which he began by seeking Trotsky's collaboration in a fight to depose Stalin. The Escalante case vividly demonstrates the relevance of this chapter in the history of the Soviet Union to the current problems of the Cuban Revolution.

But it is precisely these historical lessons which Escalante's former friends and collaborators wish to keep the Cuban revolutionists from studying. The reason is simple. Anyone who objectively examines the facts of that heroic time cannot help but conclude that Leninism and Trotskyism are identical. Still worse from the viewpoint of the Cuban Stalinist faction, all the lessons of those days speak against the basic policies represented by the Escalante tendency.

### Stronger Stuff

For people addicted for a quarter of a century to the dope of the Moscow frame-up trials, it is not possible to stay on such mild stuff as vague references to 1909, etc., in talking about "Trotskyism." The craving for something that foams better in the mouth is well nigh irrepressible.

Unfortunately the de-Stalinization process in the Soviet Union cut off the habitual drug at its very source and it is not easy to find a substitute. However, Escalante's former comrades are not completely devoid of imagination; and they have come up with something that can give you quite a jag. *Hoy* devotes its June 17 ar-

---

* For better appreciation of typical Stalinist statements like these, consult the investigation and conclusions made 25 years ago in 1937 by the "Commission of Inquiry into the Charges Made Against Leon Trotsky in the Moscow Trials" which was headed by the well-known educator and philosopher John Dewey. In two volumes, available in most libraries, **The Case of Leon Trotsky** and **Not Guilty**, both published by Harper & Brothers. For the truth about Trotsky's life his relations with Lenin and his revolutionary views and activties, consult Trotsky's autobiography **My Life** or the standard three-volume biography by Isaac Deutscher. For easily available evidence of Trotsky's view of Lenin see the biographical article written by him in the thirteenth edition of **The Encyclopedia Britannica**, Vol. 30, page 697.

ticle to presenting this synthetic drug.

On the one hand they minimize Cuban Trotskyism. "Trotskyism in Cuba," *Hoy* proclaims, "never represented anybody and never had any influence." On the other hand they saddle Cuban Trotskyism with a figure who never belonged — the biggest labor czar under Batista.

### Pegging the Lie

Eusebio Mujal, deservedly one of the most hated bureaucrats in the history of the Cuban labor movement, began his career as a member of the Cuban Communist Party. As *Hoy* explains it, he was expelled in the thirties. According to these same historians, Mujal, after his expulsion from the ranks of the Communist Party, became "leader of Trotskyism in Cuba."

We are next informed that Mujal's role is "well known." Among other things, he "placed himself at the unconditional service of North American imperialism." Mujal's record as a witch-hunter, company-serving bureaucrat and imperialist servant is then recounted as if this had some connection with "Trotskyism" rather than his original training ground, the Cuban Communist Party.

The absurdity of such an amalgam can perhaps be better appreciated if we put it in terms of the U.S. labor movement. Namely, that the Socialist Workers Party "never represented anybody and never had any influence." Moreover, its leader was George Meany, well-known bureaucrat of the AFL-CIO, who placed himself at the unconditional service of Wall Street and then followed reactionary policies in accordance with the character of "Trotskyism."

To indicate the true record of Cuban Trotskyism at the time in question a few paragraphs from a report published in the October 1935 *New International,* magazine of the American Trotskyists, should prove of interest:

"The army of Cuba (a country without national frontiers) reaches the exorbitant figure of 18,000 soldiers, with a budget of $18,000,000, which means, consequently, per capita expenditures higher than in Europe or in America. To this must be added several thousands of men of the technical and secret police who devote themselves exclusively to the political persecution of every person and organization opposed to the government. In addition, there is the rural police, controlled by the municipal governments, which is only an appendix of the general staff of the army and which collaborates loyally in the persecution of all opponents. In general, the soldiers as well as the police are recruited from the most degenerated social strata, the slum proletariat of the cities and the famished peons of the country. They are very generously paid and enjoy all sorts of privileges which assure their unconditional submission to the government.

"To supplement the oppressive apparatus, directed essentially against the working class, exceptional tribunals have been created which judge all affairs of a political nature. These tribunals have put into practice a series of laws of a Fascist nature, like the prohibition of strikes, of trade unions, the suppression of proletarian propaganda. They have likewise prohibited the right of free speech, free assembly, etc. This series of laws, put into effect by the regime of Mendieta and Batista, wipes out all democratic rights and puts the working class of Cuba in a position known only in the completely Fascist countries.

"The exceptional tribunals have

pronounced sentences of from six months to ten years against members of the Bolshevik-Leninist party [the Trotskyists] and have condemned our trade union militants for the sole crime of possessing a membership card. At the present time, thirty of our comrades, eminent political and trade union leaders for the most part, are in prison. With the rank and file members of our trade unions, a total of nine hundred workers have been imprisoned, including a minimum of sixty women. These figures refer exclusively to the city of Havana.

"Outside of those mentioned above, hundreds of students and petty bourgeois revolutionists have been imprisoned. The repressive conditions are at present undoubtedly much more violent than in the years of the Machado dictatorship. In addition to imprisonment, the number of workers assassinated rises every day."

**Batista's Terror**

The report tells in more detail about the terror: "Even in the day-time it was considered a criminal misdemeanor to walk the street by twos or more. The police and the military hordes invaded the streets and fired on the workers wherever they dared to assemble. The headquarters of every proletarian organization were raided, sacked and demolished. Our trade union center, the Havana Federation of Labor, was raided, all the furniture in it smashed, the documents taken, and all found there arrested and beaten. The government admits a total of thirty dead, although the figure is actually much higher. Among the dead was our comrade Cresencio Freire, the head of the bakers' union; the student leader Armando Feito and the leader of the Cuban Revolutionary Party, Enrique Fernandez, who was a member of the Grau San Martin cabinet. After the general strike, the military tribunal sentenced to death the young revolutionist Jaime Greenstein, who was executed at Santiago de Cuba, and condemned comrade Eduardo Galvez and others to perpetual incarceration . . . .

"The persecution is becoming increasingly intense. Our comrades imprisoned in the penitentiary of the Isle of Pines are forced to work in the swamps and quarries that surround the prison."

Of special interest in the radical movement at the time was the rapprochement between Antonio Guiteras, head of Young Cuba, and the Trotskyists. The report refers to this: "Guiteras had a broader view than his successors. He had an international perspective for the Cuban revolution. To achieve this goal he had the intention of convening a continental congress in Mexico of all the parties of the Left and he insisted a good deal on inviting all the sections of the International Communist League [the Trotskyists] on the American continent, as he informed our party.

"But early in May, Guiteras was taken by surprise by the army near the town of Matanzas, just at the moment of embarking for Mexico. Together with the Venezuelan Colonel Carlos Aponte, he was assassinated.

"The death of Antonio Guiteras created a different situation on the Cuban political scene."

Today Antonio Guiteras, who might have developed into the Castro of the thirties, is revered as one of the martyrs of the Cuban Revolution. Rightly so, for it was the independent current represented by him and the Trotskyists and similar revolutionists in the thirties and preceding decades that finally produced a leadership capable of toppling the Batista dicta-

torship and winning the first great victory of socialism in Cuba.

Where was the Communist Party in those days? It had its martyrs and its heroes, too, and they will always be remembered for their valiant and self-sacrificing struggles. But the policy makers of the Cuban Communist Party did not look towards the rank and file for inspiration and guidance. Their eyes, like those of Earl Browder in the United States, were on Moscow and this was the time of the great purges, the frame-up trials, the savage witch-hunting of 'Trotskyists"; the time of blood which was capped by sinking a pickax into Trotsky's brain; the time which *Hoy*, like its sister publications throughout the world, today euphemistically calls the time of "the errors of Stalin."

### "Man of the People"

In 1934 Stalin initiated his "people's front" policy. In the USA this meant switching to support of Roosevelt, a policy which Browder carried to its ultimate logic of open support for Wall Street. In Cuba it meant switching to support of Roosevelt's and Wall Street's man, Batista. In June 1935, shortly after Batista murdered Guiteras, the *Communist International* commented approvingly on the change in tone in the Cuban Communist Party press as the new line went into effect: "This is a splendid beginning. The Party is ridding itself of the mistaken idea which restricted its initiative, the idea that the proletariat is opposed by one reactionary front composed of all parties from the A. B. C. to the Guiteras group. It is beginning to differentiate in its approach to these organizations. It is beginning to seek its allies — albeit even inconsistent and temporary allies — in the organization of a genuine national revolution . . ."

The supreme reward for this turn was posts in Batista's cabinet. In return the grateful leaders of the Cuban Communist Party hailed their "inconsistent and temporary" ally Batista as a "man of the people."

The Cuban people, however, paid a bitter price for this policy. Instead of winning their revolution in the thirties as might have occurred had Guiteras lived, had the Trotskyists survived Batista's terror, or had the Communist Party followed a revolutionary-socialist policy such as was advocated by the Trotskyists, the Cuban people had to wait for a new generation of revolutionists intelligent and audacious enough to hew their way around the Escalantes.

It may seem odd that *Hoy* would venture to refer to the historic record in attacking Trotskyism. Great as the risk may appear, *Hoy*'s need is greater. To make the attack appear impressive, learned-sounding, if falsified, references to history are required. The "lessons of history" pitch is a convenient guise for pushing current interests. Besides, the risk is not too great. The Escalantes were instrumental in suppressing the Trotskyist newspaper in Cuba. The victim is thus hampered in meeting the slander and in pointing out the falsifications. Nor can he easily call attention to the real lessons of history in opposition to the aims of the slanderers.

The ax which *Hoy* is grinding is plain enough. The Trotskyists, *Hoy* affirms, work "to combat the Revolution by presenting themselves as more revolutionary than the Revolution itself."

"Their labor," the Stalinist newspaper continues, "is to try to sow confusion, to divert people from serious revolutionary work

in order to launch them into senseless discussions and discussions, to sow doubt in the future of the Revolution and to create whatever obstacles they can to its development."

In brief, *Hoy* stands against the right of revolutionists to discuss freely whatever they feel needs discussing, even if for the moment they may sound more revolutionary than the Revolution itself, and brands those who might wish to discuss or debate policies — whether with the aim of clarifying, modifying or changing policies — as sowers of doubt and confusion and creators of obstacles.

**"Free Speech"**

From this it follows by a not-so-strange logic that *Hoy*, whose discussions, as we see, offer impeccable examples of lack of confusion and avoidance of diversionary topics, should have the right to block or to censor any thoroughgoing discussion of such sensitive subjects as the meaning of the obstacles to the Revolution created by Escalante and his tendency.

While *Hoy*, in its campaign against "Trotskyism," does not go so far in its series of articles as to demand that discussion be put in a strait jacket, it nevertheless cites with strong approval the way Stalin ended the right of free speech in the Soviet Union after the death of Lenin under guise of putting a stop to "anti-Soviet activities."

*Hoy* puts it this way:

"The Trotskyists complain that in the Socialist States they have no freedom of action.

"In the Soviet Union they had it until 1927.

"What did they use it for?

"To attack the Party, to foment division, to distract militants from constructive revolutionary work with interminable discussions, to weaken confidence in the possibility of the Soviet Revolution triumphing in face of its enemies and constructing socialism among the peoples of old Russia, to conspire and sabotage.

"The Soviet people, because of this, had to end their freedom of action."

The inference of this repetition of old, long-ago exposed Stalinist slanders is that under guise of fighting "Trotskyism" today Stalin's course should be emulated in Cuba.

But the Cuban revolutionists are inclined neither to admire nor to emulate Stalin. This thoroughly healthy inclination has been strongly reinforced by the exposure of Stalin's crimes undertaken at the Twentieth and Twenty-second Congresses of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Thus it is not so easy to put over a Stalinist line in Cuba today.

What Escalante's former comrades need to make up a plausible case is some current material. Where to find it? The main stream of world Trotskyism does not appear very vulnerable. It is not only strongly for the Cuban Revolution, it could with some justification even be called "Fidelista." Nevertheless, *Hoy* is not without resourcefulness. Scouting around for possibilities, *Hoy* ran into a singular piece of luck.

The world Trotskyist movement happens to be split into various tendencies. Among them is a minor one, the "Latin-American Bureau," which has adherents in Latin-American countries. This current stands way out in the ultra-left field.

It, for example, considers the Socialist Workers Party — which helped found the Fourth International in direct collaboration with Leon Trotsky — to be so opportunist that it "has had no-

thing to do with Trotskyism or with Marxism for a long time."

The Latin-American Bureau is so "pro-Soviet," as *Hoy* might put it, and so little critical of Khrushchev that it hailed the resumption of nuclear testing by the Soviet government and even condemned those who expressed disapproval of the abrupt and arrogant way in which Moscow disregarded the feelings of the world-wide peace movement.

The Latin-American Bureau is even farther to the left on the crucial issue of war. Maintaining that U.S. imperialism will inevitably plunge humanity into atomic war no matter what the opposition may be, the Bureau seriously proposes that it would be more to the advantage of the Soviet Union and the socialist cause if the Soviet government struck the first blow. Members of this group believe, something like the end-of-the-worlders, in a final Armageddon in which the international class struggle, taking geographic form, will be settled with nuclear weapons. They believe that humanity will survive this hell of modern science and construct a new civilization on the radioactive ruins left by the final war of capitalism.

The adherents of the Latin-American Bureau are defenders of the Cuban Revolution and there is not the least reason to doubt their word that they would die for it. As might be expected, they are also critical of the leadership, especially Fidel Castro. (They seem to regard Che Guevara with a more comradely eye.) They work out in considerable detail numerous measures which they think ought to be put into effect in Cuba — at once.

A current like this can be found typically in all revolutions and broad revolutionary movements. The Russian Revolution was no exception. The ultra-leftists added to the complications facing the central leadership. Lenin, however, not only opposed the ultra-leftists. He also recognized them as a legitimate current. The reason was thoroughly practical. While generally their proposals were bizarre or utopian or could lead to disaster if put into effect as policy, still their observations and criticisms might contain a grain of truth well worth noting. If they were wrong on a question they put forward it was better to argue the question openly so that everyone would understand why they were wrong. In any case, as people basically loyal to the revolution, they had a right to voice their opinions in accordance with proletarian democracy, to bring their views to the attention of other revolutionists, to be handled honestly and fairly, and to receive reasoned, if firm, answers.

That was Lenin's way. It is not *Hoy's* way. *Hoy* saw the position of the Latin-American Bureau as something that could be fitted — with the right tailoring — to its own peculiar needs. And so the artists went to work.

### Scissors and Knives

Instead of presenting the position of the Latin-American Bureau in an honest way and debating it on its merits, *Hoy* set out to present it as serving American imperialism.

The technique, however revolting, is simple enough. A speech made last January in Brazil by J. Posadas, a leading figure of the Latin-American Bureau, constitutes the raw material on which the operators bring their knives and scissors to bear. They do not name Posadas. They do not name the newspaper from which they took his speech. (The text is available in the March 7 *Voz Proletaria*, published in Buenos Aires.)

They slice out phrases for quotation, glue them into new connections, trim them, "interpret" them in the light of the Moscow frame-up trials, and then assign them, not to Posadas, but to "the" Trotskyists.

### Stalin's Methods

An example or two will show how these Cuban practitioners of Stalin's methods operate.

"For them," says the June 23 *Hoy*, speaking of "the" Trotskyists, " 'the policy of the Cuban leadership continues to be that of limiting the extension of the Latin-American revolution.'

"Why?

"Because 'in all the speeches, in all the Cuban press, not a word appears indicating that the definitive victory of the Cuban revolution depends on the triumph of the world socialist revolution or of the triumph of the colonial revolution. Everything is placed exclusively upon the construction of socialism in Cuba.

" 'This is the conception of Socialism in one country.' "

*Hoy* then goes on to "interpret" this to mean that the Trotskyists hold that the Cuban Revolution cannot triumph at all until the world socialist revolution first triumphs. From this it draws a series of ridiculous alternatives: the Cuban Revolution must be renounced, or the struggle for socialism in Cuba must be given up, or revolutions must be made elsewhere before a revolution can be undertaken in Cuba. Against these absurdities, *Hoy* advances powerful arguments which, of course, are devastatingly sensible in comparison with the idiotic Trotskyist position which they "quoted."

But Posadas was not that absurd. Here is the first phrase used by *Hoy* above as it appears in context in the concluding paragraph of the speech made by Posadas:

"We can conclude, affirming that Cuba is part, but only part, of the permanent process of the world and Latin-American revolution. If the revolution does not advance and if Cuba does not intervene in order to make it advance, the dangers for the Cuban Revolution will be immense every moment. It will be that much easier to defeat imperialism to the degree that its aggression occurs under conditions of extension of the Latin-American revolution. But to the degree that *the policy of the Cuban leadership continues to be that of limiting the extension of the Latin-American revolution*, the task of imperialism will be that much easier." (We have placed the phrase torn out of context by *Hoy* in italics for easier identification.)

The rest of the quotation cited by *Hoy* is taken from a much earlier part of Posadas' speech in which he is contending that "in Cuba" a "serious advance of the revolution and of socialism" cannot occur unless a similar advance occurs in other places.

In this completely different part of his speech, Posadas is simply wrong factually when he declares that "not a word" appears in the Cuban press or in speeches indicating that the "definitive victory" hinges on victories outside of Cuba. He is also wrong factually when he declares that "everything is placed exclusively upon the construction of socialism in Cuba." The truth is that the Cuban revolutionists are following an active international policy, especially in Latin America where they correctly point to the revolutionary example which Cuba has set for all the other countries.

Here is another example of *Hoy*'s method of presenting the views of revolutionary opponents,

this time dealing with Posadas' insistence on the importance of freedom of discussion:

"With this propaganda," says *Hoy* (again in the June 23 issue), "they contribute directly to the campaign of imperialism on the lack of liberty in Cuba.

"In consequence they demand:

" 'the masses of the continent must get the feeling that a revolutionary opposition exists in Cuba.'

"Neither the masses of the Continent nor the masses of Cuba need in the least way the existence of an opposition in Cuba which, whether with phrases of the left or with arguments of the right, would serve imperialism in its aims of promoting disturbances in our country and preparing favorable economic-social conditions for their criminal plans of new armed interventions against the Revolution."

**Quotes Out of Context**

Here is the original phrase, again italicized for easier identification, in the context from which *Hoy*'s artists extracted it:

"The Trotskyists must be permitted to publish their newspaper and the masses must be permitted to organize freely. It is in this way that the North American masses can be influenced, since they will be able to compare this situation with the 'democracy' of their own country, which does not permit the printing of a Communist daily. *The masses of the continent must get the feeling that a revolutionary opposition exists in Cuba* which, while fighting to the death in defense of the workers' state, holds an ideological position that seeks to carry the revolution forward. The Cuban revolution is on the rise, but it still does not meet the principal problems of this stage in which the Cuban revolution, the Cuban workers state and the Latin-American revolution are the same thing."

Despite the simplifications and the exaggerations, is there not a grain of truth in this? Would not fair consideration of this view help to enrich discussion among Cuban revolutionists? But *Hoy*, as representative of the Escalante tendency, has other purposes in mind than discussion of such questions. It passes by in silence the real points which Posadas makes and instead of taking them up — which should be easy enough for genuine Leninists — it doctors a single phrase so as to make it appear to be "proof" that "the" Trotskyists "contribute directly to the campaign of imperialism." Isn't this procedure a disservice to the Cuban Revolution if not worse?

Continuing in the same way, *Hoy* makes out that "the" Trotskyists are ignorant of some of the stages of the Cuban Revolution. (Posadas makes some factual errors concerning the course of the agrarian reform.)

Taking up a different issue, *Hoy* makes out that "the" Trotskyists were against the victory at Playa Giron over the counter-revolutionary invasion mounted by Eisenhower and Kennedy. (Posadas makes the mistake of trying to weigh in a pair of balance scales the relative importance of the victory at Playa Giron and the extension of proletarian democracy in Cuba.)

This is not all in *Hoy's* roundup. With "quotations" the editors prove that "the" Trotskyists are against the huge mass mobilizations that have marked the Cuban Revolution. (Posadas, not seeing too clearly through the ultra-left smoke in his glasses, misses the importance of these mobilizations and tends to brush them off as "plebiscites.")

Still another success is *Hoy*'s

demonstration that "the" Trotskyists are against the Second Declaration of Havana. (The North American and European Trotskyists translated the Second Declaration and distributed it around the world; but Posadas believes that editorially he could improve on it and that politically it is a step backward.)

Finally — this is a real bombshell — *Hoy* establishes with nothing less than quotes from an original source that "the" Trotskyists are against Fidel Castro. (Posadas believes that Castro still has a long way to go before he can be trusted with the red charter qualifying him as a simon-pure Marxist-Leninist; and Posadas has the further quirk of believing that Castro is not an initiator and mobilizer but simply a reflector of pressure from below.)

In brief, *Hoy* takes an ultra-leftist, who is a sincere defender of the Cuban Revolution, deliberately misrepresents his views, grossly inflates his factual errors, calculatingly twists his remarks to make him look like an agent of imperialism, hides the fact that it is dealing with the opinion of one person, or at most a minor tendency, and then offers this literary frame-up to its readers as an analysis of the position of the world Trotskyist movement on the Cuban Revolution.

**Blas Roca's "Innocence"**

This is the way *Hoy* seeks to put pressure on those who are concerned and worried about the Escalante tendency and its weakening effect on the Cuban Revolution. With such means, learned in the school of Stalinism, it seeks to get them to back up. *Hoy* says to them in effect, "Watch out. You are playing into the hands of Trotskyists. And look where that can lead you!"

The April 16 *National Guardian* reported an exclusive interview with Blas Roca just before Anibal Escalante was dismissed from his post. The final question asked Cuba's "top communist," as the *National Guardian* characterizes him, was: "Do you welcome to the ranks of Cuba's friends and partisans in the U.S. people of any orientation, for example Trotskyists? How can Cuba's U.S. friends best help Cuba?"

This was Blas Roça's written reply:

"I am not well acquainted with those who call themselves Trotskyists in the U.S. We are separated from Trotskyists in general by fundamental points of view, and from some in particular by their actions as enemies. But I think that all in the U.S. who sincerely defend and support the Cuban revolution, and the right of self-determination of the Cuban and other Latin American peoples, do a worthy revolutionary job and we value them whatever their ideological concepts may be. North Americans who defend Cuba defend their own liberty and democracy. They make the most important contribution to the cause of peace, since any adventure by Kennedy and the Pentagon against Cuba creates a grave peril for world peace. And they take a step forward toward liberating themselves from their own imperialists, exploiters and oppressors.

"Thus the defense of Cuba in the U.S. should be carried forward without any kind of sectarianism, with the greatest open-mindedness, with an objective spirit of judgment on the basis not of what people say but of what they do."

Blas Roca's disclaimer of knowledge about the role of the North American Trotskyists in defending the Cuban Revolution is somewhat puzzling. But let us accept it at face value.

Now will someone please give Blas Roca the facts?

The only presidential candidate to defend the Cuban Revolution in the 1960 campaign was the Trotskyist Farrell Dobbs. In the homeland of Yankee imperialism, the Socialist Workers Party made defense of the Cuban Revolution its major plank in that election and defended Cuba against both the Democrats and Republicans on countless local platforms and over radio and TV, including national hookups.

**Trotskyists' Real Role**

In the very insides of the imperialist monster, as they graphically put it in Cuba, members of the Socialist Workers Party have stood in the forefront of Cuban defense activities since the beginning — and without any sectarianism. At the time of the Playa Giron attack, the Socialist Workers Party mobilized its forces in conjunction with much wider layers from coast to coast for an all-out protest movement against the imperialist intervention.

It has circulated speeches of Fidel Castro and similar material on a nationwide scale and explained and defended the Cuban Revolution against the strongest spokesmen of the State Department and before the most hostile audiences in one of the most sustained and consistent campaigns in the history of the American Trotskyist movement. The effectiveness of this work was testified to by such an important independent figure as C. Wright Mills, author of *Listen, Yankee*.

These efforts were paralleled by the rest of the main stream of world Trotskyism in Latin America, in Europe, and wherever Trotskyists have any influence.

When he has digested this information, we invite further comment from Blas Roca. We prefer that he say it to *Hoy*. It can be quite simple — a letter to the editor something like this: "I really meant what I said in that interview printed in the *National Guardian*. In basic approach I meant it not only for the United States but for Cuba. And what I said is especially applicable to Communists who are duty bound to set an example. In accordance with those sentiments, *Hoy* ought to admit its slander and make up for it by printing the straight facts about the real position of world Trotskyism."

Escalante and his former friends, it is true, might not like a declaration of that kind; but, by countering *Hoy*'s divisive attack on partisans of the Cuban Revolution, it would certainly help strengthen unity in the defense of the Cuban Revolution.

And in the United States it would make it easier to call for fair play for Cuba if it could be reported far and wide that in Havana critics who have the interests of the Cuban Revolution at heart get fair play even in the pages of *Hoy*.

# Available Pamphlets on Cuba

FIDEL CASTRO

| | |
|---|---|
| *Fidel Castro Speaks to the Children* | $ .25 |
| *History Will Absolve Me* | 1.00 |
| *UN Speech* | .25 |
| *Castro Speaks On Unemployment* | .25 |
| *Cuba's Socialist Destiny* | .25 |
| *May Day Speech, Che Guevara: Economic Planning in Cuba* | .50 |
| *The Second Declaration of Havana — Cuba's Answer to The OEA* | .15 |
| *The Revolution Must Be A School Of Unfettered Thought* | .15 |
| *Fidel Castro Denounces Bureaucracy and Sectarianism* | .35 |
| *Fidel Castro Speaks On Marxism-Leninism* | 1.00 |

JOSEPH HANSEN

| | |
|---|---|
| *The Truth About Cuba* | .25 |
| *In Defense of the Cuban Revolution* | .25 |
| *The Theory of the Cuban Revolution* | .25 |

HARRY RING

| | |
|---|---|
| *How Cuba Uprooted Race Discrimination* | .15 |

●

For a complete listing write to:

**Pioneer Publishers**

**116 University Place**

**New York 3, N. Y.**